THE BARKS COLLECTOR

No. 33

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"And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk, toward heaven..."
-- Frost

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IN THIS ISSUE: Part III of Fine Feathered Friends (The Bad Guys); Part I of our new series, Collecting Carl Barks; "The Psychology of Comic Book Collecting"; Tales of Wonder, Tales of Woe; The Barks Exam part II.

BACK ISSUES: All back issues are available. 1-8 Xeroxed cost $30 ppd. worldwide. Issues 9-30 are $2@ ppd. worldwide. 31/32 is $2.50, and our #1 Annual (full-size) is also $2.50. Or we will send you a copy of every single issue ever made, for just $55. Wow.

THE BARKS FOUNDATION: About the only serious thing we do is to run The Barks Foundation. See inside for full details on the Foundation, which raises money for Save the Children. We have been very pleased with fandom's response to our efforts. See inside for details on how you can become a member...

THE OTHER GUYS: If you like The Barks Collector, you would also like The Duckburg Times, which is the other Barks fanzine. Write them at: TDT, 400 Valley View, Selah WASH 98942. It's $1.25 per copy, so send the money and they'll send you a copy. If you are a Little Lulu fan, you'll never be completely fulfilled until you get that fanzine: The Stanley Steamer. Write Jon Merrill, PO Box 431, Cedar Knolls NJ 07927. This one's also $1.25.

LETTERS COLUMN: We love to get letters, and include many of them in our Letters Column. If you have something to say, and would like to see it in print, send it in. We especially encourage you to send us your best story related to comic collecting. If you were sitting around the fire on a cold winter night, talking Ducks, which story from your own experience would you tell?

FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS: For those of you that are following this series, here's a rundown on the installments so far published: Part I was in TBC 30 and was an article on Gladstone. Part II was an interview with Gyro, and was in 31/32. Part III is in this issue. We had hoped to do Scrooge this time, but unfortunately he can not be located, so we are forced to postpone it until we manage to find him. Helper has resurfaced (see Letters Column), and we heard from Gladstone at last. We welcome your suggestions for this series; would you like to do one of the articles?

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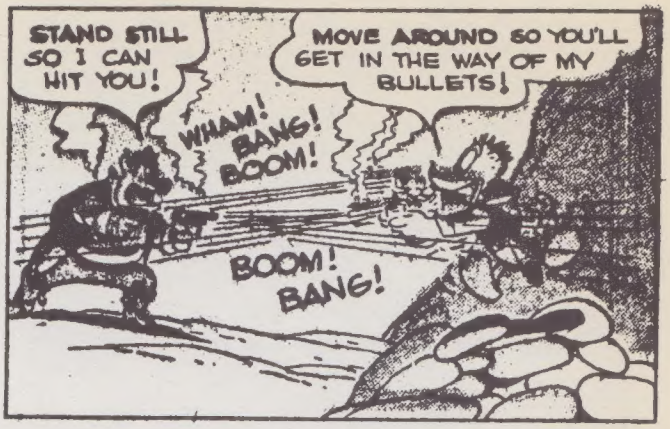
THE DISNEY COMICS ARE BACK! WRITE FOR DETAILS ON SUBSCRIBING TO THEM!

FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS: THE DISNEY DUCKS. Part III: The Bad Guys (In Not-so-Dubious Battle). Parts I and II are in TBC 30 and 31/32. Text ©1985 John Nichols.

All the Duck stories can be divided into two categories: those in which the Ducks compete/cooperate with one another, and those in which they do so with outsiders. Generally, the Comics and Stories issues were of the first type, and the longer Uncle Scrooge and Donald Duck of the second. Stories involving the Ducks competing with outsiders were often where we saw the villains at work. Who were these villains? What did they have in common? Were they as well developed as the Ducks? What else can we say about these bad guys?

Here we propose to examine a group of Barks's bad guys. Not all his villains have been included, but we have chosen those we feel best represent the others at their worst. We hope to arrive at a better understanding of the villains Barks drew, of some of his attitudes we can infer from these villains, and of the Ducks themselves.

The first thing that seems clear about the Barksian villains is that they do not all fit into any one category. There are villains who are bad to the core, like Blacksnake McQuirt, and others who are bad for a reason, like the treasure guard in FC 159 Ghost of the Grotto. Both these bad guys are certainly villains, but their motives are not similar. Blacksnake is bad period and that's that. No mitigating circumstances. His men even carry submachine guns, and he lobs a hand grenade at Donald. He has established a cattle-rustling ring in Bullet Valley (FC 199) which makes use of a fancy X-ray branding iron. As we can see from this frame, Donald's survival owed more to Blacksnake's bad aim than to anything else.



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Blacksnake represents one of the categories of villains we find in the Duck stories: bad to the core. This is by far the major category, since most of the Barksian villains are of this type. But there is a second category, of which we do find a few examples. This comprises those villains who are bad for a reason, and not just because they are rotten at heart. Azure Blue represents this type villain, although one would not think so on first reading. Azure does seem to be a rotten-to-the-core villain, but remember that he was corrupted (in FC 408) by the evil influence of the semi-mystical helmet that would make him king of North America. Not that this diminishes his villainy in any sense. He is bad no matter what the reason, but what makes him different from Blacksnake is that there is a reason, whereas with Blacksnake there is none, other than his evil nature.

We will see as we go along that there are several ways we could classify the Barksian villains. This way is just one of them, but it seems useful in that we may not have thought of the Barksian villains as (at least some of them) victims of their

environment. Not that Barks was making any excuses for them; he doubtless was implying that these villains should have fought off the evil influences, just as the Ducks resisted the corrupting power of the Golden Helmet but Azure did not. No, Barks certainly would not have fallen into the "There but for Fortune" school of thought with his villains. Nonetheless, not all of them were depicted by Barks as being evil to the core.

Besides Azure Blue, another villain that was not totally responsible for his villainy was the armor-clad guard in Ghost of the Grotto, FC 159. He was the final victim of a long series of kidnappings, going back to Sir Francis Drake and his treasure left aboard the ship with but one guard. As each guard grew old, he would kidnap a local boy to take his place guarding the treasure until Sir Francis could return. Here Barks clearly sympathizes with the villain, even to the point of redeeming him in the final frame (below). Here we see the no-longer villainous guard enjoying a hamburger after fifty years of fish....

AND THE ARMORED MAN — HOW IS HE TAKING THIS SUDDEN TURN OF EVENTS?
ANOTHER OF YE HAMBURGERS, SCULLERY KNAVE! THEY TASTE MIGHTYE GOODE AFTER AN HALF CENTURY OF YE FISH!
YE END

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The Grotto kidnapper was unlike most of the Barksian villains for another reason: he was more well-rounded, and better developed as a character than were the majority of Barks's bad guys. There were reasons for the villains being shallow characters. Perhaps most important among these reasons was that many of them appeared only once or twice. Character development comes with repeated appearances. The reader must carry a given set of facts about the character, in order for that character to fill out. Scrooge's avarice is a given, and need not be brought up in every story. But one-shot villains had to be shown to be evil; there was no time to develop their character in just one or two stories. So that those frames devoted to describing Blacksnake's character must of necessity depict him as a bad guy. There is no time to show him picking flowers, if we are to think of him as the villain,and if Barks is to finish the story in the allotted number of pages. Thus space limitations meant that the one-shot villains were not at all well rounded.

The Brutopian despot in Uncle Scrooge #17 is a good example of this shallowness of character. What a nasty character is this guy! He certainly falls into the category of being bad just to be bad. There was no time in the story to depict him as anything but evil, if the story was going to fit into the required number of pages. He is a good example of the caricatured nature of many of the Barksian villains. And he appeared only in the Scrooge #17 story.

The number of appearances put in by a villain is another method we could use to classify these bad guys. There were villains who appeared only once or twice, and then disappeared forever into the comic badlands. Such was the case with Blacksnake, and with the Brutopian despot described above. Such was also the case with the villain in Terror of the River, FC

108. He built the terrible sea monster just because he liked to scare people, and almost did Donald in in the process.

The FC 108 villain is more typical of Barks's other bad guys, in that he is evil to the core. In fact, the Grotto villain and Azure Blue may be the only bad guys who have mitigating circumstances in their favor. But although these bad-to-the-core villains are by far the greatest in number, they are not the only ones. Azure and the Grotto guard stand as good examples of Barks's ability to develop a character and round him out, even if that character appeared in only one or two stories.

But the villain-as-victim type is certainly in a very small minority in the Duck stories. The great majority of the bad guys are more like the one in Terror of the River. And they fall into both the other categories we have mentioned above: one-shot appearances and regular characters as well. This seems odd indeed when we consider the number of appearances put in by the Beagle Boys, Magica, or Angus McBrine. Repeated usage would seem to require a softening of character in the villains, or at least more character development. Instead, what it produced was a set of running gags we came to associate with the villains: the Beagles' 176-combination prison numbers, Magica's obsession with the #1 dime, etc. But it did not produce any lessening of their evil nature. Indeed, it seems to have magnified it. The Beagles got meaner each time we saw them, and Magica got more powerful with each successive appearance.

Before turning to the regulars, we want to look at a few more of the one-shot villains. No listing of the Barksian bad guys would be worth its salt without mentioning the Disney witch. She appeared but once: in FC 203, The Golden Christmas Tree. This story is commonly held to be one of Barks's weaker efforts. This because of the cartoon-like gags that run throughout the entire comic. Barks's stories were best when they were close to our own concept of reality, and they got worse the more they deviated from it. All the magic we see from the Disney witch is not at all compatible with the down-to-earth nature of the majority of Barks's stories. There is even one frame in which she turns into a sawmill/printing press, and devours a huge log, converting it into newspapers with headlines reading "Witch foils housebreaker". Keep this in mind. We'll see the same thing happen in another of Barks's weaker villains, a modernized version of the Disney witch, called Magica de Spell.

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A second villain Barks used but did not create was Black Pete. Pete appeared in Pirate Gold, The Riddle of the Red Hat, and then years later in Comics and Stories 132, second Barks story. Of these three appearances, he seems most at home in the FC 79 Mickey Mouse comic. This because, as a cat, he is of course more suited as villain in Mouse adventures. He is

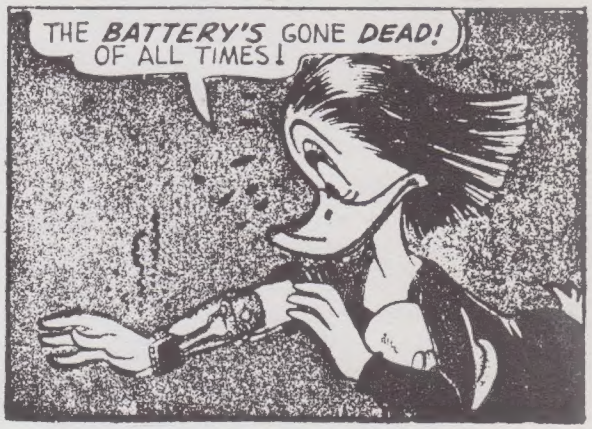
out of place in a world of Ducks. Pete is perhaps unique among the villains, in that he is (perhaps due to his plumpness) almost comical. Sort of like Moe on the Three Stooges. Pete is actually a "regular" character, but his early appearances go back to the Mickey cartoons and stories. It is from those stories we know him, and since he always lost out in those stories, we know there's really nothing to fear from him in the Duck stories either.

We might also mention Diamond Dick the jewel thief, from FC 189 The Old Castle's Secret, as another of the one-shot villains. He would fall into the "bad to the core" category, although he is by far more interesting than some of the others in this category. For he was, in addition to being evil, a genius. His plot to replace Scottie and get the McDuck fortune almost worked. And it was a most intricate plot, involving even the use of a spray that would make him invisible. The nephews' cunning saved the day, as it so often did.

These were the one-shot villains. They were mostly evil to the core, like the FC 108 sea-serpent builder. Some were all but stick-characters,like the witch in FC 203; others were more interesting, like Diamond Dick. But they all appeared but once or twice, and then disappeared forever into the comic badlands.

Now we turn to the regulars. Again, this is a varied group, as were the one-shot villains. Some were formidable opponents, others were almost frivolous. What was it that made some of the villains interesting and some not? This has already been hinted at. Here we hope to show that there were certain characteristics that made a villain either interesting or dull. Just what were these characteristics? Here we need to turn to the characters themselves.

Magica de Spell first appeared in Uncle Scrooge #36. She quickly developed from a witch who relied on fancy gadgetry, to one in full possession of the usual powers of sorcery. In issue #36 of Uncle Scrooge she has to rely on little pellets called "flash blinders" to temporarily blind her opponents. And in Uncle Scrooge #38 (her second appearance), her power derives from a ray-gun device she wears on her arm. Here we see her fallen victim to the same mechanical failure that plagues regular folks' machinery. The Magica in this frame below is the early Magica, and hardly the full-fledged witch she quickly became....



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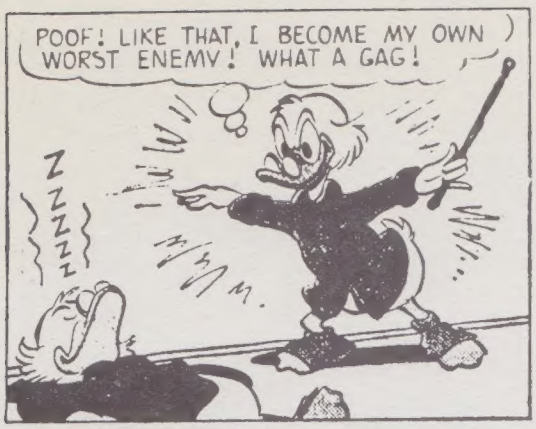
The above panel is from #38 Uncle Scrooge, from 1962. Just one year later, in issue 43 Uncle Scrooge, she is a full-blown witch. By now she is even able to change her form at will, and actually takes on Scrooge's form. Indeed a far cry from issues 36 and 38, her first two appearances. Contrast this frame (above right) with the Magica who had to rely on gadgets to get her evil done. Quite a change. And after issue 43, Magica never went back to the old ways of relying on machines. In Scrooge #48, she can change people's faces at will, making them take on the form of the



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person they are looking at. And in Scrooge #50, she is able to assume any form she wishes, and even becomes a Roc, a huge and menacing bird. Likewise in her two appearances in Comics and Stories. In issue #265 (Raven Mad), she can hypnotize a crow. And in #268 (The Ten-Cent Valentine), she changes into a young lady jogger. So that after her first two apperances, in issues 36 and 38 of Uncle Scrooge, Magica was straight sorcery. She was in fact Barks's own version of the Disney witch, in that she had unlimited magical powers. Of course this is her weak point: she simply is not a very believable character. True, she is the only villain of them all to have a Duck form, and so we could have expected great things from her. But we find in Magica the same old problems as with the Disney witch: she is better suited to cartoons than to the comics. We have become used to thinking of the Duck world as more or less our own world but inhabited by Ducks and dogs. The introduction of Magica turns the world upside down, by introducing magic into it.

Nor is her character helped by the many tantrums she throws. This greatly weakens her as a believable character. The Beagle Boys threw no such tantrums, nor did the other male villains. We simply have to say that Magica de Spell was little more than the Disney witch with feathers. This because she was simply not a credible villain, due mainly to her cartooney magical powers. Besides, she even lacked any such redeeming traits as humor; the #1 dime theme could have turned out to be funny, as it did with Gladstone, but even this potentially funny gag does little to arouse our interest in what is after all a lackluster character.

If we contrast Magica with Angus McBrine, we see right away what was the essential problem with the sorceress. McBrine (the Pig Character) is another regular villain in the Duck stories. He is bad bad bad. Not at all like the Grotto villain (in fact all of Barks's regular villains fall into this evil-to-the-core category). But he is at least believable, simply because he is operating under the same rules as the Ducks: the rules governing our known world, and not the world of magic. He is a formidable opponent, from his first appearance, in Darkest Africa (1948 March of Comics #20). In this story he is out to best Donald in their search for the rarest of all butterflies, and will go to any extremes to do it.

Ten years later he resurfaced in Donald Duck #54, Forbidden Valley. These two stories are amazingly similar: both involve a trip to the tropics in search of a rare animal; in both the Ducks' boat is sabotaged by the Pig Character,and in both the villain appears in the end wrapped from head to toe in bandages. But the Pig Character had changed from the first to the second of these stories. His nose had gone from a dog nose to the more villainous pig nose we associate with him.

Here we see him in Donald Duck #54, as he would appear in subsequent issues of Uncle

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Scrooge. The Pig Character appeared in several issues of Scrooge, starting with #41 (Status Seeker) from 1963. His name often changed, but never his character. In Scrooge 44 he appears under the name Foulcrook, along with his partner Slyviper. And he subsequently appeared in several more Scrooge issues from the 1960's, including #'s 52,55 and 57. But in these stories he comes across as a stock character, and lacks the appeal he had in the DD Forbidden Valley story. Even the plots are repeated, so that usually he throws the Ducks into a deep pit in some faraway land. By this time McBrine had seen his better days, namely his earlier appearances in Darkest Africa and Forbidden Valley. Still, he is much superior to Magica, mainly because he is a more believable character.

The "Dreaded Beagle Boys" made their first appearance in issue 134 of Comics and Stories, and then hardly ever appeared in that series again. They were in issues 252 and 291, but almost all their appearances were in the Uncle Scrooge issues. In fact, they were in almost 20 of the first 50 issues of Uncle Scrooge, although they never won a battle with him. They are probably the best villains of those Barks created, for several reasons. First, they are entirely believable, something we found to be lacking in Magica. The powers they employed were mainly their evil wits, and not any magic.

They were likewise a very funny lot, in spite of the sometimes deadly serious nature of their contests with Scrooge. Here we see them in Uncle Scrooge 23, planning what they will do with Scrooge's money, once they get their hands on it. Humor such as this was typical of the Beagle stories....

BACK AT THE LIGHT-HOUSE!
I'M GOING TO TAKE MY SHARE OF TONIGHT'S HAUL AND BUILD GOLD KENNELS FOR MY WOLF PACKS!
I'M GOING TO BUILD A GOLD HENHOUSE WITH MINE-WHERE MY FOXES CAN PRACTICE CHICKEN STEALING!
176-176
176-671
176-671
BEAGLE BOYS INC.

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And finally, they were a group and not one individual villain, which allowed for situations to arise which were not possible with the single villains. (They drive a car marked "Beagle Boys Inc., for example)

The running gag with the Beagles was, of course, the prison numbers on their shirts. At first these were random numbers, but by issue #7 Uncle Scrooge, they were nearly always combinations of the three digits 1,6 and 7. Once in a while a Beagle would have a number made up of other digits, although this would generally mark him as not in the regular group, as is the case with Grandpa Beagle in some of the stories.But usually all their numbers were different

combinations of these three digits.

The humor we see in the Beagles is really the same humor we see in Scrooge: their greed for Scrooge's money is as outlandish as Scrooge's love for it. And this exaggerated greed is what we find so funny about them. We have seen from other characters that Barks made use of exaggeration of some trait to inject humor into the stories (e.g.,Gladstone's luck, the Jr. Woodchucks' endless titles, etc.)

We have posed several questions in this series on our Fine Feathered Friends. One was "Where does Donald get all his money?" And another, "Why does Donald so fear any Luck contest with his cousin Gladstone?" To these we must add another, involving the Beagles: "How do they manage to do all their evil, given that they wind up in jail after so many of the stories?" Time after time they are thrown in the slammer at story's end, only to be there (even the same ones, with the same prison numbers) ready to go again, in the next story. Life and the Duck stories are full of mysteries.....

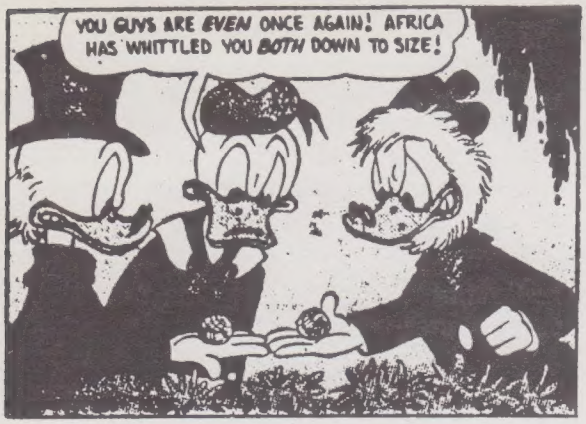
The Beagles appeared in one most unusual place: a Christmas Parade (#9 Dell). They were the hirelings of Ollie Elderduck in this story, something which was most unusual for them, since they almost always were independent businessmen, and never worked for other crooks. They were about the closest thing to the Mafia we find in the Ducks stories, in the sense of being an organized group of hoods.

But they also shared one characteristic will all the others villains, of all the categories we have examined. They invariably lost. This was the rule without exception in the Duck stories: all the bad guys came out losers, just like in the Westerns. So it was with Magica, the Disney witch, Azure Blue, McBrine, and all the rest. This was the one unifying thread joining all the villains. They differed in many respects, as we have seen, but their one common point was that they all lost in the end. This is of course the given in any comic story. The crucial point is how effective is the artist in prolonging our suspense, and at this Barks was a master indeed, often drawing out the suspense until the final few frames. We always knew the Ducks would win, but we hardly ever knew just how this would happen. Generally the nephews had a major role in this victory, something Donald would hardly ever admit (I saved them).

There is one other category we ought to include in this look at the Barksian villains. These are not really villains at all, but rather tough opponents. This group includes two characters who were among Barks's best: neighbor Jones and Flintheart Glomgold. And although they were not villains, they nonetheless gave the Ducks as much trouble as any of the villains they faced. We include them here for that very reason: that they were formidable obstacles for the Ducks, and in that sense were very much like the villains. These two characters differ from the real villains in that they did not always lose in the end, and they were not at all evil, as were the villains.

Flintheart Glomgold made his first appearance in Uncle Scrooge #15. Here he and Scrooge get into their first money contest, which Scrooge wins by having the most string. Flintheart plays the same role here as we later see played by the Maharaja of Howduyustan: competing with Scrooge for the world's money title. Again, we knew all along (or we thought we did) who would win, but not until the last page does Scrooge win the

battle, as we see here in this frame from the last page of this story....



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Flintheart's second and final appearance was in Uncle Scrooge 27, the Money-champ story. Here he and Scrooge convert all their assets to silver dollars, and then pile these on the runway at the local airport to match piles. Glomgold loses here as well, but not by very much. And there is always the threat that he will return in some future issue, and finally get the better of Scrooge. In issue 27 he tells Scrooge that he has acquired much new wealth since their previous encounter in issue 15. So a victory for Scrooge over Flintheart meant only that he had temporarily won. For the South African Duck could reappear at any time and defeat Scrooge with his greatly enhanced fortune.

The Ducks always cooperated fully in their battles with the villains and the likes of Flintheart. So it was with the Maharaja of Howduyustan, who appeared in issue 138 of Comics and Stories, to build a mammoth statue of Cornelius Coot, the founder of Duckburg. Only by closely working together could the Ducks defeat such rivals. But such was not the case with Donald's principal rival: neighbor Jones.

What Flintheart was to Scrooge, Jones was to Donald: rival and antagonist par excellence. In fact, Jones was replaced only by Gladstone, and in fact shares many of Gladstone's characteristics in the early Duck stories. But we will see that there was one crucial difference between the Scrooge/Flinheart and Donald/Jones rivalries.

Jones's first appearance was way back in issue #34 of Comics and Stories, the good deeds story. But we never actually see him in that comic,since he is behind the newspaper Donald has thrown in his face. We first see him in issue 38 Comics and Stories,where he is the fully developed Jones we all know: doing battle with the 1940's style Donald: very much a cartoon-style cantankerous Duck. The battle becomes so pitched that the nephews finally step in, but not to help out Donald, as is the case in so many of the conflict stories. Rather, they get their uncle evicted, so the two brawlers won't live next door to one another. It turns out to be a futile effort, since they both get evicted and both (by mere chance) wind up neighbors in a new area far across town. But what most impresses us about this episode is that Donald gets no help from any of his relatives in his fight with Jones. Such is the case in his future fights with him: Donald in every case has to go it alone when doing battle with Jones.

Then Donald's battles with Jones were not like Scrooge's contests with Flintheart, since Scrooge always got the support of Donald and the boys. Donald got no such help in fighting Jones. What we might infer from this lack of support is that this is, of all the battles fought by the Ducks, the one which should not have been fought. That is, Donald's fight with Jones is a grudge fight, and as such does not deserve the support of his family.

Jones made one other rather interesting appearance, in a story never published in the regular series of Comics and Stories.This was the "Christmas Carol" story, intended for the Christmas 1945 issue of Comics and Stories (#64). Here Donald is determined to serenade Jones with his carols, but Jones will have none of it, and wants only peace and quiet. This one had more than its share of brawling between these two feuders, and so we can well understand why it was pulled in favor of a milder story.

These were the villains that did battle with the Ducks. We have seen that some appeared just once or twice, like Blacksnake or Diamond Dick. Others were regular characters, like the Beagle Boys or Angus McBrine. Some were rotten to the core, while others were bad but for a reason, like the one in Ghost of the Grotto. The one trait they all shared was defeat; none of them ever won against the Ducks.

Essentially the villains were much like the other Duck characters, in that the more credible they were, the more we enjoyed them. Among the best were the Beagle Boys, McBrine, and Azure Blue. And among the worst were Magica and the Disney witch.

We have of course not included all the villains that appeared in the Duck stories. We hope we have shown the unifying effect these villains had on the Ducks, and the degree of suspense they injected into the stories. The better villains enriched the stories with humor and adventure.

We began by asking several questions about the villains. Were they as well developed as the Ducks? Of course not. Mainly because they always had to lose, and they had to act in an evil fashion. Donald and the other Ducks could be sometimes good and sometimes bad. Not so with the villains. As a corollary to this, the villains were greatly limited in how much good they could do, since we expect good to be rewarded in the comics, and they being bad guys had to lose. So that had they shown their good side, we would have expected them to win in some cases, something which is impossible with the villains. So that since they could do little good, they could show us only their evil side, and thus their character development was severely limited.

Our apologies to those bad guys we missed including in this paper. They'll get even in our dreams...

COLLECTING CARL BARKS
Part I: The Comics
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With this article we begin a series that will look at our hobby in general. We plan on covering several aspects of Barks collecting, including finances, books, reprints, and more. We hope both the beginner and the hardened and jaded pro can benefit from this series. A word of warning: those of you who insist on tight and disciplined research will not find it here. This will be more of a chance to ramble and take you down some (we hope) interesting byways, and not down the straight and narrow path of scholarship. We think you'll enjoy it. I know it's been fun to write....

In this first part of the series I want to look at the comics themselves. Not the stories so much, but rather the actual books. So much has been written about the message these books carry (the stories themselves) that we have always neglected the medium, which is the actual books. Let's forget for a while the efforts we all make to preserve them and stave off browning: the debates about plastic versus Mylar, and the methods for deacidification. This scarcely does justice to books we have loved for years. I write this while surrounded by these books. I work with them daily: reading, grading, filing, mailing. At one point in my life I had a temporary job stocking housewares in a hardware store. Those were inert and cumbersome objects: a mere burden. But the comics could never be that. So my work goes slower. Each book must be graded and filed when it arrives, just as the dishpans had to be in the store. But there the comparison stops. The books are pieces of my childhood, and as such are handled with care I never accorded the kitchen wares....

The books themselves would be a joy even without the stories. If for no other reason than for the ads on the back covers. Ads that promised sea-horse families (the father somehow managed to keep his pipe lit even under water); ads that offered a tour of Europe for a dime. The list goes on: There were Kraft offers of an entire baseball field, or even a chance to star with Bat Masterson on TV. Wheaties offered us such sports stars as Phil Rizzuto to emulate. In the 1940's the back covers were generally Disney ads for their movies: the Comics and Stories series below #140 or so are nearly all Disney ads, advertising their movies or their comic-related books. Then in the early 1950's Wheaties started appearing on the back covers, which opened the door for Cracker Jack, Schwinn bicycles, Daisy BB guns, and the like. These were of course not just WDC&S ads, or even Disney ads, but ads that appeared throughout the Dell line. We never were exposed to ads like those that appeared in more "mature" comics of the 1940's: ads for suction pencils to rip out blackheads ("I'd marry Jim in a minute if it weren't for those filthy blackheads..."). Nor were we offered "genuine birthstone rings: be sure to give ring size". Those were aimed at an older crowd....

No, our back covers featured Fresh-up Freddy (7-Up), and Sam's Lingo Lessons (also 7-UP); Captain Kangaroo selling us bikes; and log cabins and rockets we dreamed of owning. Some of us actually did own them, usually to our great disappointment. I never wrote away for the 25,000 (was it that many?) soldiers in their own carrying case. But a friend of mine did. They were all razor-thin: almost invisible if you turned them sideways. Such an ad is on the back covers of WDC&S 254 and 293. What a step down from the old 1940's high ground of the Disney movie ads. Or even from the early 1950's

ads for Wheaties and Kraft and Schwinn. There was something honest about those ads. But by the late 1950's we were suspicious of the ads: even when we saw that miniscule disclaimer at the bottom of the ad, warning (someone, certainly not us kids, who really couldn't understand it) that the sea-horse family was "not intended to represent actual sea-horses". Right.

We could win a "captain's ride" across America (nothing sneaky about that), or we could "make money and get prizes" by selling their seeds or their cards (my mother bought all of mine). The possibilities were infinite: the only boundaries they knew were the limits of our allowance. This field is, curiously, one which has never been explored. There was such a rich variety of these back-cover ads, that we ought to encourage research into them. Come on kids, get to it! If you know just twenty people.....

The back cover ads were an important part of our overall enjoyment of the books. Another was the richness of color we found in the comics. I cringe when I see Marvel comics. I wonder if the kids know the kinds of color they are missing. Oh I know, there are some special high-priced comics that do have good colors, although even those are done on fancy paper and have glossy colors. There's just nothing like the old rich colors we enjoyed in the Duck stories, done on the newspaper-type paper yet. Remember the stack of bowling balls in The Land Beneath the Ground? It was multi-colored; each ball seemed to be a different color. But the reprint of that same story had most of the balls the same color. Fortunately for us, the new Disney comics coming out now appear to be getting back to those old rich colors, something which will warm all our hearts for sure.

We can't talk about the old books without mentioning their seasonal nature. I know fall is here because I have to light a fire. I used to know it because the Back to School issues were out. The Dell Giants took us back to school, and were with us through the summer vacations. They were a part of our Christmas, and even went to the beach with us. Their thickness was special, just like the seasons they commemorated were special. They had puzzles, games, and even word stories. You could spend a lot of time locked up in your room with a few new Dell Giants. Still can...

How did Donald get to be a teacher? He somehow was always in the first frame of the back-to-school issues. And it was always announcing either Scrooge's generosity (sic), or his nephews' genius. Remember how the kids were all cheering the first day of school? Obviously Barks did not draw those issues.

We already mentioned the changes that took place in the kinds and quality of ads that were on the back covers. There were similar downhill changes in the thickness and width of the books themselves. The earliest issues of Comics and Stories had just one staple. They were so thick they actually had a table of contents. You could almost tell the year of publication with your eyes closed, going by the width and thickness of the books. What better comment on the way we've gone societally than to lay a copy of WDC&S 457 on top of WDC&S 34, and then compare the price, width, thickness, and number of ads in each book? I don't know what this all means, but I do know this is part of the attraction of issue #35 over issue #457.

I always wrote my name (in pen of course) on the front cover of my comics. How else could you prove it was yours in all the trading binges? And there is a certain pride in ownership. I think most collectors I know did that too, at

least judging from the number of comics I see with names written on them. I still have some with my signature, reminding me that years ago I really did care about my handwriting-- that penmanship was something that could determine your very future...

(I learned just recently that some names can sometimes be removed with rubber cement and a little luck. You just rub it over the name and then, after it dries, rub it off with a clean cloth. I've had good luck with it, but try it first on a comic you don't mind smudging. Sometimes you get a smudge, depending on how stable the colors are on the cover.)

And what of the books today? For us now they are of course something other than what they were for us as children. Now they are both a burden and a joy. A burden because they are worth so much money. We worry about them becoming brittle, being stolen, water-stained, or otherwise damaged. Some of us bypass this altogether by collecting just the reprints of the stories. And some of us have completely abandoned all forms of the comic book, and gone instead to the Carl Barks Library or similar collections of the stories in book form. This shows us that there are both collectors of the stories and collectors of the comic books. Most of us are both. We could never give up the smell of an old comic. I count that among my favorite smells: an old comic. Dealers quickly learn to judge the acidity of comic paper by its smell. You can smell acidity coming on. It has a pungent smell that bites your nose. The ideal smell for old comics is a mellow one, but not at all acrid.

Browning pages are of course not the only defect we find in old comics. The rolled spine comes from having been in the middle of a high stack, and having been put there with the pages misaligned. I have heard of brave collectors who iron the comic under a towel. I've never been brave enough to try it. Even the Giants get rolled spines (sounds like a baseball injury?). It's not uncommon to find a NM Vacation Parade #1 with a rolled spine. Makes you break down and cry.

One interesting defect is the light-at-the-edge-of-the-world (or rather the edge of the comic) stain. If you stack up your comics in sunlight, it is of course almost impossible to align them perfectly, so that the entire stack exactly fits one comic on the other. Some of them will stick out of the stack. This caused the ones sticking out of the stack to brown, but only at the edges that were sticking out. Most of the cover, which was protected from the sun by the other comics on top of it, did not brown.

Other defects come to mind: some conscientious collectors put binder holes in all their comics: either with a paper puncher or a coat hanger. This probably just about halves their value. One step beyond this was to actually have the books bound at a bindery into a neat book format. I have been offered entire runs of Comics and Stories in this format. I never buy them, since they are almost impossible to sell. For two reasons: first, the books are of course mutilated and cannot be removed and handled (collectors like to handle individual comics, not whole collections). And second, something which most collectors may not realize: if you are trying to sell a complete collection of something, it will bring less than if you have just some issues of it. But, I hear you cry, I thought a complete set would be worth MORE, not less. Maybe with stamps, but definitely not with comics. The reason for this is simple. No collector needs all issues of a run, just some issues.

And anyone who buys a complete run of a title expects to get a discount. Wouldn't you? This is why it's usually better not to try to sell a complete set of Uncle Scrooge as a set, but rather as single comics. You can get retail for single issues. You can never ever get it for a complete set. Since the owner of the bound volumes of comics can never sell them off as singles, he can never get anywhere near retail, even if the books were not mutilated by having been bound. Stay away from bound volumes...

There are obviously many sides to the books themselves: the ads, the size and thickness, the seasonal nature they had when published, and the smell. (Actually the sense of taste is probably the only one we do not use when reading the comics.)

There are other aspects of the books collectively. One is their limited quantity. Obviously there is no way to make more of a 1954 comic original. No one knows how many copies of any given book exist. But the supply of all books is certainly dwindling, so that the value will almost certainly rise as more and more of them are destroyed or lost, and especially as more of them are locked into private collections whose owners have no plans to sell ever. I just hung up the phone from buying a set of Comics and Stories from the mid 1940's. The owner got them from his mother's house, where they had been for many years, until they were finally lured out by the owner's awareness of high prices. Had it not been for the element of financial gain, they would probably have remained forever undiscovered.

This is why I have always objected to those who criticize dealers. It's not so commonly heard nowadays, but ten years ago lots of collectors complained that we dealers had created an artificial value for the comics. Baloney. While there are cases of dealers hording comics in order to drive up their value, the value for old comics is determined by the affluence of the people who want to collect them. Those who collect rare Barks comics are often professional people who read them as kids and want to be able to read them again as adults. There was a time when most Barks readers were poor college students, but these poor college kids eventually graduated, and then quickly ceased to be poor. Had they flunked out of college, the price for original comics would probably have stayed cheap...

Without the prices that comics bring today, our favorite Duck comics would be incredibly scarce. We've read enough Scrooge stories to know that. Dealers are no more than any commodity brokers: we spend a lot of time and money advertising, travelling and digging for old comics, and for that we deserve to make a profit. No one works for free, except Daisy and her club members.

Are these old comics good investments? It varies from year to year. Eight years ago they certainly were. I know collectors who did quite well by buying comics on speculation. Today prices have levelled off so that you have to know what you're doing to invest. But one thing I never see mentioned when people talk about investing in comics is whether the investor will be able to sell them retail. It can be pretty expensive to advertise, or to go to cons. Any potential investor should be aware that in order to make any kind of profit, he MUST be able to sell them retail when he does decide to sell. So no, I don't think they're as good an investment as they were a few years ago. If you have a way to sell them retail, they are probably a good long-term investment, since the number of collectors is growing but the number of comics is shrinking.

All the gold in the world would supposedly fit into half the Washington Monument. All the copies of Four Color 159 would probably fit into a tenth of it. I once sold a copy of Donald Duck Tells About Kites (a very light comic) for more per ounce than the price for gold. Comics obviously can be a good investment, if you can buy them at the right price, and if you make sure you get accurately graded comics.

What about foreign issues? I sometimes see advertisements for Canadian issues, which are virtually identical to their American counterparts. I personally have found these very hard to sell, and usually shy away from them. But I know of other dealers who have had better luck with them. When they do sell, they bring less than the American originals. There are also Spanish-language originals (done about the same time as the American originals) with the same format. These are almost worthless as far as money goes. What you are selling when you deal with a non-American original is the story, not the comic itself. Only the original American comic has the high value we associate with old comics. Not the Canadian, Mexican, or any other foreign-language reprints. These will sell sometimes because they have a rare story, but they will not bring the same price as the American original. The one exception may be Canadian comics selling to Canadian collectors, but I have never found even that to be the case.

The most interesting of the foreign reprints are the Australian issues. A customer of mine bought his Duck collection from a store in Australia that was making copies of the old American originals, by using them to make new plates and then run off comics from these plates. After they had made the plates, they would sell the American comics for a nickel each. These Australian comics are done like the Dynabrites, and are the only source for English-language color reprints of some very rare stories, like Terror of the River. These issues were printed as late as the 1970's, and so are not too hard to find today.

There are some interesting tidbits about the Disney comics produced over the years. They never sold for less than ten cents, even when a dime was really a dime. They got up to sixty cents each just recently, before they ceased production. I think their low point was "Hollywood Chatter" which appeared in some of the earliest issues during World War II. Sort of like "Inside Dynasty" would be today.

Mutilated comics generally come in two varieties: those missing the front cover strip, and those with the coupon out of the back cover. Ever read the text at the bottom of the first page on some of the old comics? That part that says the comic cannot be sold in any mutilated form? The mutilated form they were talking about was the comic that had had its top 1/4 (the title) ripped off in order to return it for a credit as an unsold copy. Stores were not supposed to sell the comic, once they had torn off the title to return for a refund. But some of them did, of course. Otherwise none of them would resurface today. Woe unto thee, greedy store clerk...

All these factors went into our enjoyment of the old comics. I have tried to show that the stories were not the only reason we enjoyed the books. They were of course the main reason. But all these other factors added to that enjoyment, and continue adding to it. Next time you have a 7-Up, remember Fresh-Up Freddie. And Sam's Lingo Lessons. Then you'll be sparkin'...

"Tales of Wonder, Tales of Woe"
(True and wondrous stories, as Told to John Nichols....)

Comic collectors collect all manner of things besides comics. Books, lithographs, price guides, and a wide range of similar objects fill up the collector's room. It's not just comics. And it's not even just physical objects we collect. It's often intangibles. Like good stories. In that sense we're like the fisherman, who has all the paraphernalia that goes with his hobby (hooks, rods, etc.) but also has built up a whole collection of stories, to while away the time between catches.

So do we have our stories. Whether they are truth or fiction is of little concern, in fact is hardly ever questioned. We use them to spice up the collecting. We embellish them with each successive telling. We sometimes outright invent them. But we love to hear them. I call these stories Tales of Wonder, and Tales of Woe. I'd like to share with you some of the best ones I've heard over the years, from Duck collectors around the country. Get a Duck fan going on his favorite stories, and he quickly forgets he's calling long distance. The story has to be told. That some of the stories told have finally wound up in print will perhaps justify the telling. But for the die-hard collector, there is no need for any justification. For the telling itself is a joy, as is the hearing.

The Tales of Wonder are those stories involving some happy event, usually the Happy Find. We all have such stories, or hope to have them soon. They tell of finding huge collections, or at least key books, at yard sales for a dime each. They tell of attics and old ladies who don't want to charge too much, since they ARE after all second-hand books. No, you just give me whatever you think they're worth. The reality is of course almost always the opposite, since any non-collector who has any old comic thinks it's worth a fortune, so that dealers find it particularly hard to buy from these owners. But there are a few such Happy Finds. Mostly they take place at yard sales nowadays. The attics and their heat have pretty much devoured all the collections they were hiding.

But Mint Terrors of the River have made their way to my bins from yard-sale tables. I remember one seller's glee when he told me where he had bought the Mint FC 108 he had sold me for three figures: a yard sale. For fifty cents. A Happy Find indeed. Like the collector who found a large set of comics at his local dump, neatly stored in a plastic trash bag. Asking to be retrieved. He retrieved them of course. The comics were sold long ago, but the story remains.

My own particular favorite, and probably the reason for this article in the first place, is a find I made in 1969 here in Virginia (I love to tell it): there was a second-hand bookstore that specialized in comics. They had literally thousands of 1950's comics in stacks, for a nickel each. This in fact became the core of my collection, since I hauled out all the books I could carry. There: I've told it. Already feels better... I can see you the reader trying to top it with one of your own. But I can sense your frustration, since I'm not there to hear it. I'll get letters. Go ahead: send me your own. I'll believe it, I promise. This is the unspoken etiquette among collectors: you have to believe the teller's stories. If you don't, he won't believe yours. Or at least you have to look impressed with the story. "Gee, that's really something; wish I

could find a stack like that."

Besides the Happy Find stories, there are the Immaculate Book stories. These tell of finding forty-year-old books in absolutely perfect condition. Generally you hear these from collectors of Near Mint or Mint books. Some involve non-collectors walking in off the street into a convention, and plopping down a perfect Mint run of Donald Duck four colors, which have been stored under Grandad's suitcase since he went off to Korea. I know of one such find at a California convention, that happened just like this. They were absolutely Mint books. And what joy the story brought to the teller when I first heard it!

My own favorite (ready?) is of the coin dealer who had gathered (no one ever asks how) a set of early Comics and Stories, in the 30 to 50 range, in such perfect shape that he had actually divided the "Mint" grade into five categories: which he labelled M1 to M5. He must have had the books stored in pneumatic time capsules. The M3 to M5 books were uncanny. Electron microscopy would have revealed not a single fault. I count this as one of my most enjoyable experiences in comic finding. I was lucky enough to get them to sell. (There, outdid you again)

Another kind of story that falls into the Tales of Wonder category is the one that tells of a personal encounter with Carl Barks himself. This of course is unique to our hobby, and not general to all memorabilia collecting. These stories range from sending Carl a letter and getting a nice piece of artwork back, to seeing him at a convention, which of course never happens nowadays. Or they can be of personal visits to see him, and of the warm hospitality the visitor enjoyed during the stay. These are told with perhaps the greatest relish. One collector I know tells of locking away in his safe-deposit box the letter that Carl sent him, with a small drawing attached....

These are the Tales of Wonder. Of course you have your own. All Collectors do. We also have our own Tales of Woe. Stories that we wish had never happened, but whose telling serves as a catharsis and makes us feel better. Primary among these is the Great Loss story. We all have stories of this kind: mothers who threw out complete Scrooge collections, because they were "cluttering up the room". Dogs that chewed, friends that borrowed and never returned, or (worst of all) maybe we ourselves threw out the books, since we had to move and what's the point in lugging them around all our lives anyway? We cringe every time we tell these stories. "I wish I had all the comics I threw away as a kid." I lost my childhood collection too. But there on my shelf, tattered but nonetheless enshrined in plastic, is my copy of Comics and Stories 197 I bought as a boy, as my own "Old Number One." Don't ask: it's not for sale.

Had we not thrown out the collections we had as kids, you would not be reading this now. For what need would there be of dealers to find rare books, if there were no rare books? Fandom as it exists now would almost certainly not exist if there were no scarcity of old comics. If we had all saved all our comics, they would have no monetary value, since they would not then be rare.

This kind of story is not of course unique to comic collectors. All memorabilia collectors have similar stories. One Antique store I've seen even had a sign that said "We don't WANT to know what your Granma had!" I feel this is doing a disservice to the

customer, since one reason he engages in the hobby is to find someone to listen to his stories. Sort of comes with the turf. But more: the dealer who is also a collector will himself relish such stories. I've always used this method as a gauge to tell whether a new dealer knows his stuff. If he shows no interest in stories, and if he has none himself, he is not consumed with the hobby. A mere dilettante.

There are sadder Tales of Woe. Stories (usually true) of robberies, either at conventions or even at one's own home. I know of several fans who have had their homes burglarized for the comics. More and more fans are using bank boxes to store their collections. (As I write this there is a news story on t.v. about thieves who just stole several Impressionist paintings from a French museum. The paintings are worth nearly fifteen million dollars.)

Just as distressing is having a key book stolen at a convention. Sad to say, there are semi-professional thieves who make the rounds at comic shows, out to steal whatever they can. This has made it essential to cover one's books with large plastic sheets at shows. Too many fans have stories to tell of losing key books at comic shows.

There is one other category among the Great Tales. This is the Supreme Achievement category. Stories in this class tell of things accomplished through reading comics or selling them. This usually runs something like "I learned to read with the Donald Duck comics" or "I learned Greek mythology through the Barks stories". This is an almost universal story among collectors.

Another Supreme Achievement story which is particular to dealers is the one that tells of things accomplished with the money that came from selling comics. From the many sets of Duck comics I have purchased through the years, I have helped their owners do all these things: go bear hunting in Alaska, bury a father, buy a diamond engagement ring ($2,000), get through one year of college, and buy a resort beach lot. The only one of these collectors to never write me again after the sale was the one who used the money to buy the engagement ring, from which I infer that he wishes he had kept the comics instead....

There are of course endless stories from all these categories. We would like to hear your own favorites, whether involving you or someone you know. We might run some of them in a column. Send us your favorite Duck story, whatever it involves. You'll feel better, and I promise to believe it....

"The Psychology of Walt Disney Comic Book Collecting" by Dr. Ken R. Vincent

Two of the healthiest people I know have doll houses. Their enjoyment of their hobby and the fact they felt free to engage in a childhood activity is what first allowed me to give myself permission to return to Walt Disney comic book collecting.

A few years ago there was a nostalgia craze. A large number of people began seeking memorabilia of their past. This was due partly to their affluence and partly to the same reasons that motivate us Disney collectors. While many of these collectors seek such "adult" items as china and antiques, many of them also seek out items from their childhood and adolescence. We Disney comic book collectors are definitely different from the quasi-historical collector of adult items; we are also unlike those collectors who seek out adolescent memorabilia. Into this latter category would fall those people who frequent clubs that play music solely of the 40's and 50's. Likewise, collectors of adolescent memorabilia would include those who buy and restore the cars of their youth.

A stronger ego is required to collect and enjoy objects from one's childhood. Aside from collectors of Disney memorabilia, we could include in this category those individuals with model railroads, dollhouses, doll collections, and toy collections.

In the literature of collecting, much has been written in the way of descriptive articles, but almost nothing on the "why" of collecting. To gain insight as to our motive for Disney comic book collecting and what it means regarding our personality, we must look to the general literature of personality theory in psychology.

There is no doubt that the father of modern psychiatry would have placed us in the "anal retentive" category. Sigmund Freud would have seen us as compulsive hoarders, much like our hero Uncle Scrooge. Early Freudian theorists would probably have seen us as having a maladaptive regressive need to return to childhood, but fortunately for us, much of what Freud theorized has not stood up under the light of scientific study. Also, the neo-Freudian Eric Fromm would have placed us in the category of his concept of the nineteenth-century hording orientation. Is there something maladaptive about regression to childhood fantasy? Cartoons are as old as Egypt, but we go beyond reading the funny papers: we collect and save stories from our childhood.

Modern theorists have been much kinder on what they call voluntary regression, or regression in the service of the ego. Eric Berne and Thomas Harris, pioneers in a school of therapy that has come to to be known as transactional analysis, conceptualize personality as consisting of parent and child transactions. Parent statements are teaching and authority statements; adult statements are rational and logical, and the child part of our personality is where the fun is. Granted it is not healthy to stay in the child domain all the time; but according to the theory of transactional analysis, any time we are having fun, we are in the "child" aspect of our personality. One cannot deny that this is what we are doing when we enjoy our comic books. Followers of the transactional school see it as healthy to be

able to be in the "child" state when appropriate; they likewise see it as most unhealthy when we are not able to let our "child" out once in a while.

Probably the strongest statement for the healthy nature of voluntary regression comes from the father of the humanistic psychology movement, Abraham Maslow. Maslow spent a good deal of time stydying the characteristics of what he called extremely healthy people, or in his own words, "self-actualized individuals". One of the characteristics of self-actualization is to have a healthy childlike quality and to be able to engage in voluntary regression. By this he meant not only to be able to become fully involved in play, but also to be able to take delight in experiencing things of childhood. Maslow pointed out that this voluntary regression is more apt to occur in healthy individuals. People who are rigid and fearful of external disapproval are more apt not to be able to enjoy things, and to seek security in and conformity to socially prescribed adult roles.

While no study has been done to measure the overall mental health of those who collect the Walt Disney comic books drawn by Carl Barks, there is above-average quality and depth of feeling exhibited by those who have written for The Duckberg Times and The Barks Collector. From this we can infer that they are of above-average maturity. One of the things about collecting the Disney comic books drawn by Barks is that one is almost compelled to become a collector in order to enjoy the stories, because Barks was such a prolific author. No doubt there are many closet collectors out there who buy such things as the Abbeville Press book reprints for their children or to "have on hand for the nieces, nephews and cousins when they come over." We who have the "fever" know, however, that the stories Carl Barks drew are not for isolated enjoyment. They can not be easily passed on from generation to generation, as can such stories as "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"or "Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel", or even like a small series of stories such as those by Beatrix Potter. Carl Barks's drawings of the Duck Family span 27 years, and counting reprints, they span 43 years. They touched the lives of decades of American children. The stories that Barks wrote and drew have an appeal beyond nostalgia. In a survey by Ken Bausert, which appeared in issue #21 of The Barks Collector, individuals ranging in age between 11 and 47 years preferred those stories Carl Barks drew in 1952 above all others. Granted that those stories we read as children have special psychological "pull", and are read, as Paul Kirby noted, on two levels. Kirby wrote in The Barks Collector #29 that the Barks stories are timeless escape literature, and that when one reads a favorite Duck comic from his childhood, "one is escaping to two worlds: the same world he used to escape to, and at the same time his own childhood."

But there is another psychological level that we as adults get to enjoy the second time around. That is, Barks's stories are written on two levels: the gags that the child in us enjoys, and the gags our parents laughed at when they read us the stories. An example of this is the story "You Can't Guess" in Christmas Parade #2. In this story the Duck family is worried that Donald will forget what it is that the nephews want

for Christmas. So Gladstone, Grandma and Scrooge each buys the boys an erector set. The same is true of Barks's more cynical comments on lawyers in "The Golden Helmet", as well as his general comments on such people as psychologists, scientists, and many others in authority. These can be appreciated not only by a child who has no authority, but by an adult who knows all too well the wisdom of Barks's message.

No doubt one reason we collect Barks's stories is simply because they are good stories. An easy way to measure this is the market value of the comic books. Many old comics about superheroes or other animal characters have a market value less than a tenth of what the Barks comics sell for, and this includes many Disney comics. Carl Barks is a unique individual and cartoonist in that not only is he an excellent artist, but also an outstanding storyteller. He did his homework, had a sense of humor, and had good character development. Barks's Ducks are not the two-dimensional Disney cartoon characters; they are three-dimensional people who are as real as any characters of well developed novels. But they were special for us in our childhood, simply because they were Walt Disney's Ducks. It is this aspect of Carl Barks's stories that requires us in adulthood to have the mental health to engage in healthy controlled regression to be able to enjoy them. Comic book collecting can get out of hand only when the acquisition becomes an end rather than a means. The Carl Barks Library affords us an opportunity to have what many of us dreamed about in childhood: a "complete collection". It also affords us the opportunity to have some "new" Barks stories, since most of us have never had access to his 27-year span of Duck stories. Because of this we can all find some new favorites in addition to the old favorites of our childhoold, as we acquire stories that are new to us.

In conclusion, what can we say about individuals who engage in the controlled regressive behaviour of collecting Walt Disney comic books from their childhood? We can say that they are probably reasonably normal and that there is a great likelihood that their overall emotional health is above that of the average person, since they have the emotional strength to engage in voluntary healthy regression and to allow themselves to enjoy something that is just plain fun!

THE BARKS EXAM: Part II: Donald Duck and his nephews

Welcome to Part II of The Barks Exam. We decided to offer a prize after all. We will give $20 credit to the first fan to submit a perfect answer sheet for part I, which we ran last time. Send in your answers now. We will will also give $20 credit for the first fan who submits a perfect answer sheet to this part of the Exam. We will wait until all six parts have been published, to print the answers. You should send your answers as soon as possible; we will notify the winner by mail.

The Barks Exam is a series of 6 different tests, each one dealing with a different area of Barks collecting. Part I appeared in TBC 31/32. This is Part II, and Parts III-VI will appear in subsequent issues of TBC. We will offer prizes for each test, so sharpen up your pencils and break out your comic collection. These are of course open-comic tests, so use whatever resources you need.

We will publish the names of the winners of the prize for parts one and two. Get those entries in!

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THE BARKS EXAM. PART II: DONALD DUCK AND HIS NEPHEWS

1. What was the name of Donald's irascible neighbor?
2. What did Donald swallow in Trick or Treat?
3. Where did Donald and the boys fly to in the plane they won in FC 147?
4. How many fingers does Donald have on each hand?
5. In which Donald Duck comic does a car crash bring on a trip back in time for Donald and the boys?
6. In which comic does Donald get hired to spend Scrooge's money?
7. In the story in question #6, what does Donald do with the car when he sees a bug on the windshield?
8. When Scrooge gives his nephews each a bundle of money, as a test to see who will inherit his fortune, what does Donald do with his share?
9. In which story does Donald wind up with a whole yard full of cars as presents?
10. What does Donald insist on having for breakfast when he and the boys go to Bear Mountain?
11. What does Donald draw in order to send Gladstone to the Frozen North?
12. How did Donald acquire the boat in Terror of the River?
13. Which issues of Donald Duck Four Colors were made with no gloss on the covers?
14. What relation is Donald to Gladstone? To Scrooge?
15. What do the forest rangers confiscate from Donald in the main story in Vacation Parade #1?
16. In which story did Donald get hypnotized and long to go to Australia?
17. Which issue of Comics and Stories has two Barks stories? In how many of these does Donald appear?
18. What kind of ball does Donald use to raise the yacht?
19. In which story did Donald go to the moon?
20. Which country banned Donald Duck comics from their library system, saying Donald represented an undesirable family-life situation?
21. What two animals did Donald try to hypnotize?
22. Who was competing with Donald to sell Scrooge echo land?
23. Where did Donald get the custard gun he was using to hunt?
24. Which of these did Donald never try his hand at? Pilot, teacher, truant officer, mover, salesman, dog catcher.
25. Who published the giveaway comic in which Donald was explaining the proper way to fly kites?
26. In which of these comics does Donald NOT appear in three stories?: Vacation Parade #1, FC 29, DD 26, FC 108.
27. Why does the judge fine Donald in the flipist story?
28. What was Wispy Willy supposed to do to Donald?
29. Why did Donald disguise himself as the Duke of Baloni?
30. What did Donald finally do with the swimming pool he built in his back yard?
31. Which of these did Donald not raise: frogs, chickens, turkeys, bees..
32. In which comic is Donald snowblinded and has to wear sunglasses?
33. What was Donald's new profession in No Such Varmit?
34. Which of these is not a blood relative to Donald?: Scrooge, Gladstone, Granma, Gyro, Louie...
35. In which of these adventures was Donald accompanied by a one-legged parrot?: Pixilated Parrot, Ancient Persia, Pirate Gold, Gilded Man...
36. What did Donald want his nephews to do at the garden party he threw?
37. When Scrooge tried to get Donald to sell him his house, Donald refused. What was the sticking point that held up the sale?

38. Who owned the bees that stung Donald so badly he wound up in the hospital?
39. What was the name of Donald's fancy society dog that he thought was so superior to all other dogs?
40. In which comic does Donald go right to the front of a line by saying he has an important package?
41. Which one of these was the title of a story but not the theme of a comic cover?: Trail of the Unicorn, Dangerous Disguise, Big-Top Bedlam, Mummy's Ring...
43. In which of these Dell Christmas Parades did Barks's Donald not appear: #1,#2,#8,#9,#26?
45. What does the doctor prescribe for Donald to get rid of his nightmares?
46. Donald uses the tracks of what giant animal to trick the nephews into being late for school?
47. What was Donald trying to save when he entered into battle with the Terries and the Fermies?
48. In which issue of Uncle Scrooge (of the first 70) did Donald not appear in the first story?
49. In which comic did Donald try to make an atom bomb?
50. What two cereal companies made giveaway comics featuring Donald?
51. In which one of the first six Barks lithographs does Donald not appear?
52. Who created the character of Donald Duck?
53. In which Donald Duck comic did he go in search of a rare stamp?
54. In which comic did Donald get in big trouble selling Scrooge's flour?
55. Did Barks create Donald's nephews?
56. What is the only difference in the way the nephews dress?
57. In which two comics do the nephews rescue Donald from a raft on a dangerous river?
58. What is the shape of the nephews' snowball pitcher in the Snow Fort story?
59. In which two issues of Donald Duck is one of the nephews separated from the other two, and placed in a dangerous situation?
60. Who saved the boys from getting a spanking in Donald Duck Tells about Kites?
61. What do the nephews do to Pulpheart Clabberhead that finally turns him against them?
62. In which Firestone giveaway do the boys run away from home?
63. In which one do they give their new toys to the poor kids?
64. What is the JWW?
65. What is the name of their mascot? (He has four legs.)
66. What did the nephews do with the money Scrooge gave them in his test to see who would inherit his fortune? Were they successful?
67. What was Donald doing when one of the boys filmed him at it, and which so enraged Donald that he completely lost his temper?
68. In one story, the nephews were trying to convince Donald that their witching stick would work. Did it really work?
69. Which issue of Donald Duck is labelled "#1" on the front cover?
70. In which two stories does Donald try to sell something to a very fuzzy and sales-resistant client?
71. In which of these did HDL first appear?: a Sunday page, a Christmas story in a David McKay book, a pre-Barks Comics and Stories, a Barks Donald Duck.
72. In which story do the three boys help Daisy out by standing on each other's shoulders?
73. Who are the nephews' female counterparts in the Barks stories?

74. What was peculiar about the speech pattern of the nephews, when they were together?
75. Whose idea was it to use the ping-pong balls to raise the ship?
76. In which story do the nephews help Donald cheat on a turkey raffle?
77. The nephews are members of the Jr. Woodchucks. What similar organization was Donald in when he was a youngster?
78. There is a story in which Donald gets a million dollars that fall out of the sky. Who gets the other million that falls with it?
79. In which story does Donald crash into some frozen clouds?
80. What was the name of the town that was burned after being sunk in Donald's eggs?
81. In which story do Donald and family face a tribe of Inca Indians who haven't heard about the fall of the Inca empire?
82. In which story does the nephews' menagerie of animals save Donald's house from a burglar?
83. The nephews used their Woodchuck Manual to catch the mighty sturgeon in the Wild North. What did they throw into his mouth that finally brought him in?
84. Donald and the boys went with Scrooge on a mining trip to Australia. Which comic was this story in?
85. Did Donald ever meet Mickey Mouse in a Barks story?
86. Name one Donald Duck four color on whose front cover the nephews did not appear.
87. On which Comics and Stories cover is Donald seen playing music with two of the 7 Dwarves?
88. In which two Donald Duck four colors does Donald have a job working in a museum?
89. In which comic is Donald put on trial for working too much? (He taught people how to milk cows in this story)
90. What was inside the treasure chest Donald and Scrooge dug up when they went Back to Long Ago?
91. In which story does Gladstone wind up as chauffeur to Donald and the nephews?
92. For which issues of Donald Duck (regular numbers) did Barks draw the cover but not the story?
93. How did the nephews get the tickets they used in Maharaja Donald?
94. Why was Donald fined $5,000 in the story about the ruby on the beach?
95. The nephews appeared on an Uncle Scrooge cover, watching Scrooge blow some odd-shaped bubbles. What color was this cover?
96. In the story in which Donald is a mailman, there was a statue honoring a faithful mailman. His name?
97. What color was the cover to Pirate Gold?
98. Did Barks draw the cover to Christmas on Bear Mountain?
99. What is unusual about the frame structure in the story Titanic Ants?
100. How many states are in the 48 states?

LETTERS TO THE BARKS COLLECTOR

We always welcome letters, which should be addressed to "Letters", TBC, etc. We may (judiciously) edit them to allow us to include more letters. Write us with what's on your mind...

This time two of our British friends commented on our change in size as of last issue. We heard from progressive, forward-looking Scotland, as well as from a reader in that bastion of conservative thinking, London....

From Malcolm Kennedy in Glasgow, Scotland:

"Dear John: On TBC 31/32: I thought the larger format was an improvement and I certainly liked the Gyro interview. The Barks exam was a lot of fun...."

And from John Westbrooke in London, this revisionist appraisal:

"John: I preferred the old size, but then I'm a closet conservative..."

From Tracy Davis in California:

"I must share one early "Duck" experience: I was a very advanced reader in school, which fact I remember primarily because on the basis of that exalted position I stood and took my third-grade teacher to task for chastising classmates who were reading Donald Duck comics in class. I remember giving probably my first lecture: I said that I had learned lots of vocabulary from Donald Duck comics (and others), found less wit, imagination or interesting language in the textbooks she was touting, and that one should encourage reading of ANY sort. It was a memorable moment, because I was championing boys who were uncomfortable around a "brain", especially of the female persuasion. It had a profound effect on our relationships. I encouraged my male classmates to buy and read the Ducks, since they were more imaginative than some of the "action" comics favored by them, where "Oof" and "Thwack" were basic dialog... My motive was perhaps ulterior, in that I would then have more trading possibilities, as Lulu and the Ducks were my favorites, with occasional flutters with Lash LaRue, Hoppy, Gene, Roy, Mickey, Bugs, and Andy Panda... No boys would buy Lulu, so I introduced Donald and his feathered family whenever possible. And it was true that my vocabulary grew with the Ducks' input... my "lecture" contained examples which were fresh in my mind on that morning 34 or so years ago, of an issue I'd read at the breakfast table... Incidentally, that teacher began using Donald Duck (and, Heaven forfend, "CLASSICS") in her remedial reading sessions!....I can't believe there aren't more women readers on your list! Where are all the girl Duck readers I remember!?"

editor's note: Our mailing list of about 1200 names has only five to ten women. Thank you, Tracy, for your letter and your detailed Duck memories. We very much favor such letters for our Letters Column and encourage other readers to send in their personal experiences with the Ducks, whether from their childhood or their suave and cosmopolitan adulthood.

(Letters continued next page)

And from our old friend Sam Whiteside, in Georgia, who is among the most devoted Duck fans...

"John: ...In your Gladstone bibliography you omitted WDC&S 312 ("The Not-so-Ancient Mariner"),which was Gladstone's final appearance in an original Barks story (also Barks's last original story for WDC&S). To me this is an infamous story-- as close as Barks came to writing a "Love-Boat" episode. I can understand why it was forgotten. Gladstone had gone from neutral to negative to dropout. He looked like an early sixties beatnik refugee from Greenwich Village, guitar and all. His once wavy hair looked like Bob Dylan's on a rainy day. His snappy fedora and sports jacket replaced by a beret and turtle-neck sweater....The sixties' youth culture had been creeping into a lot of Barks stories at this point: witness Donald's increased libido in "MicroDucks From Outer Space" and "The Hall of the Mermaid Queen". Perhaps this is why Daisy needed her aunt to come along on the voyage in "Not-so-Ancient-Mariner", as her chaperone!

So Gladstone had gone from dapper to dirty, and Donald from swain to satyr, and Daisy from battle-axe to baby doll. But Scrooge and HDL never changed to sixties personalities....."

And from Gyro Gearloose in Oregon...

"John: Was well pleased with your selection of the transcripts for our interview in last issue. Heavens! Did I say all that?

Am pleased to inform your readers that Helper has resurfaced. A bit worse for wear, but home at last anyway. Gladstone came up the weekend after you left; as insufferable as ever. Especially since he just won FIVE new cars in less than 3 days. Also, mentioned to him that you finally have the computer for TBC-- he says it's the only way to do ANYthing nowadays. Says he has his whole raffle ticket operation on a computer (which he won for a $1 ticket, which he found on the sidewalk).Gladstone claims that he can enter twice as many raffles now, since the only problem he ever had with them was just not having enough time to fill out all the forms. He got some hotshot programmer down in San Diego to set up a program for him (called it "Gladraffle"), and that does all his paperwork for entering the various raffles now. I do know he looked sharper than ever, so I guess he's right.

I'm sending you that deanodized electron ionization chamber we talked about. Should save you some money on plane fares...."

And from Gladstone Gander...

"Greetings lowly worm! Found a copy of TBC 30, and would have written sooner, but it took me this long to find a stamped envelope in the park. Read all those riduculous things you wrote about me in issue #30. Want all your readers to know that nothing's changed with me-- just gotten better since I computerized my raffle and my finding operations. When are you running a contest ?"

And this came in, in a dusty envelope marked "Helper"...

"#!!!....**&@@@%%%..."
(Translation: we don't know what it means! Wish Carl were here to tell us!)

DID YOU BUY THIS COPY IN A STORE?

If you did, you may not know about Bear Mountain Enterprises, and all the Barks goodies we offer. Write for our free Barks Quicklist. In it you'll find thousands of original Barks comics, reprints, foreign items, books, lithos, Barks Library, etc. We carry everything available in the way of Barks items. We also offer a sub service for the new Disney comics scheduled to start up in early 1986.

If you collect original Barks comics, we have a unique plan to help you complete your collection: the Duck of the Month Club. You send your want list and tell us how much you want to spend each month. We ship comics monthly from the list, and bill your charge card, or you can send money each month. Many Barks collectors find this the ideal way to complete their collections. We can find any book there is, so send your list, and stop worrying about finding the books you need; we do it for you!

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PHONE: (804) 696-2925 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern time.

THE BARKS COLLECTOR'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY BASH

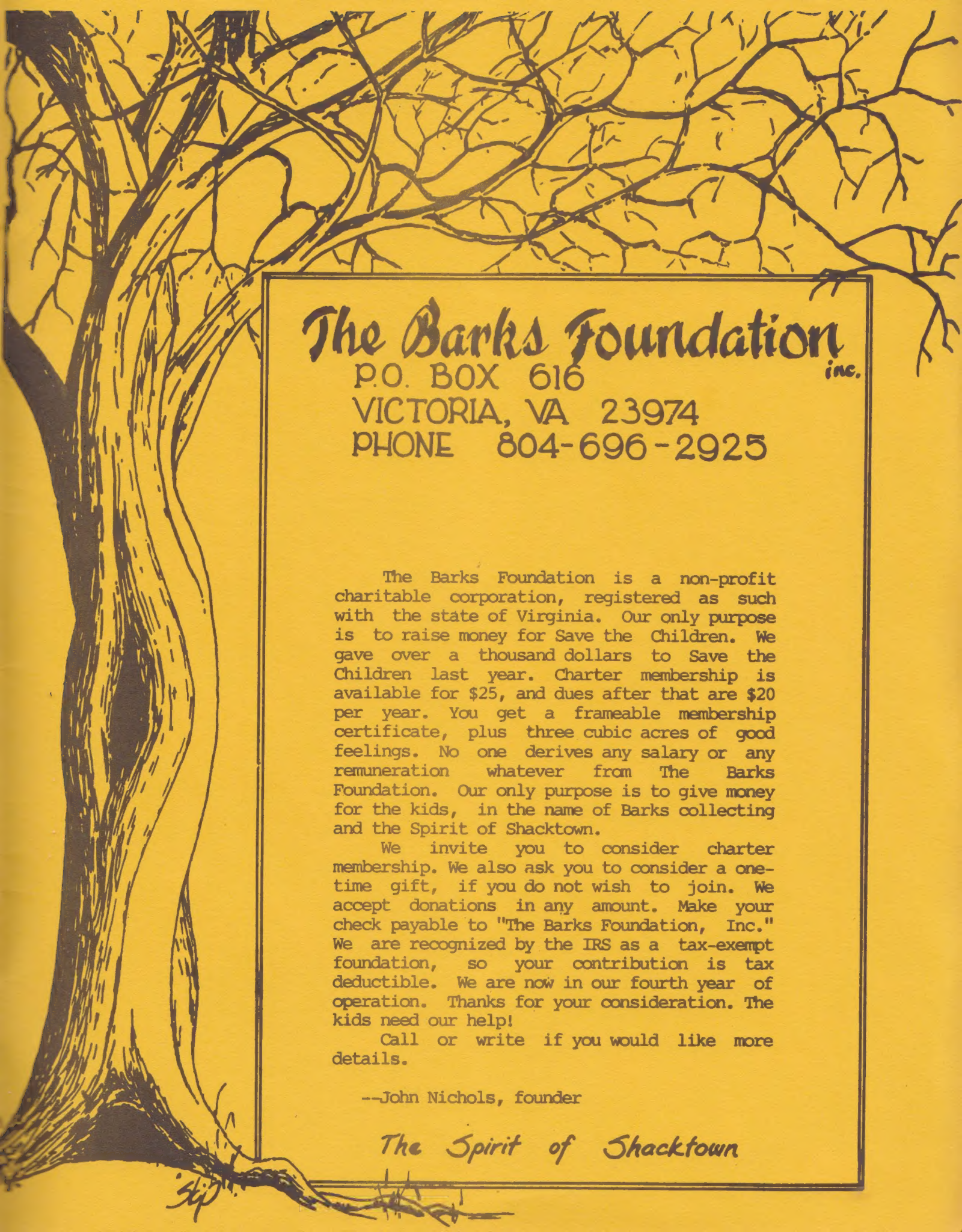
In 1986 we will be ten years old. I know we act it sometimes, too. We are interested in hearing from you the reader, as to what sorts of things you like to see us print. We prefer series of articles, and right now have two of them going: Fine Feathered Friends (part III in this issue), and Collecting Carl Barks (part I in this issue).

We are always interested in hearing from our readers, and especially are interested in finding Barks fans who like to write. We hear from many subscribers who have shown an interest in and knowledge of Barks material that would certainly make for an interesting article. You should consider writing something, or doing a cover for us, if your talents run in that vein.

We would like to have a special issue for our tenth year of publication Were you there in the Dark Times before 1976, when we put out our first issue? Notice how much brighter your life is now? We would like to have as many letters as possible, commenting on whatever interests you, to include in our Letters Column. Also we will need a special 10th-anniversary cover. So crank up your artistic ability. Imagine your artwork on the 10th anniversary issue of The Barks Collector. Wow....

This tenth-anniversary issue will be probably issue #35, out around mid 1986. We welcome your comments, suggestions, articles, or artwork. Maybe a cover that has something to do with the TBC issues already published.

We never tire of thanking Barks fandom for making The Barks Collector a success. We hope that ten years from now these issues will seem as primitive to us as issue #1 does now....



The Barks Foundation inc.

P.O. BOX 616
VICTORIA, VA 23974
PHONE 804-696-2925

The Barks Foundation is a non-profit charitable corporation, registered as such with the state of Virginia. Our only purpose is to raise money for Save the Children. We gave over a thousand dollars to Save the Children last year. Charter membership is available for $25, and dues after that are $20 per year. You get a frameable membership certificate, plus three cubic acres of good feelings. No one derives any salary or any remuneration whatever from The Barks Foundation. Our only purpose is to give money for the kids, in the name of Barks collecting and the Spirit of Shacktown.

We invite you to consider charter membership. We also ask you to consider a one-time gift, if you do not wish to join. We accept donations in any amount. Make your check payable to "The Barks Foundation, Inc." We are recognized by the IRS as a tax-exempt foundation, so your contribution is tax deductible. We are now in our fourth year of operation. Thanks for your consideration. The kids need our help!

Call or write if you would like more details.

--John Nichols, founder

The Spirit of Shacktown

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